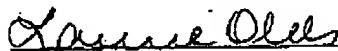


VIA FACSIMILE  
I hereby certify that this correspondence is being facsimile transmitted to the  
Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks, Washington, D.C. 20231 on  
February 28, 2003.

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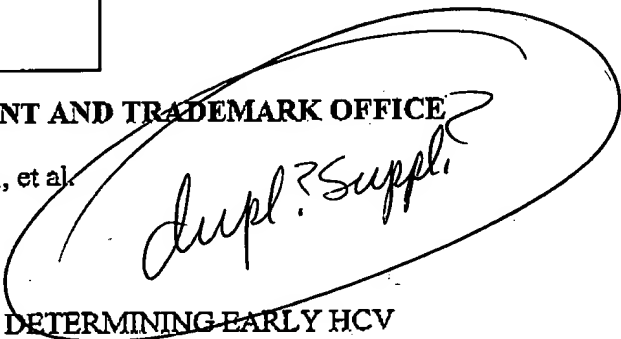


HUBR 1067.3 (10105485) - NDH

#11  
Suppl. Amended  
07.23.03

## IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant(s) : Christoph Seidel, et al.  
Serial No : 09/896,032  
Filed : June 29, 2001  
For : METHOD FOR DETERMINING EARLY HCV  
SEROCONVERSION  
Art Unit : 1648  
Examiner : D. C. Wortman



February 28, 2003

Hon. Commissioner of Patents  
and Trademarks  
Washington, D.C. 20231

**AMENDMENT**  
**UNDER 37 C.F.R. §1.111)**

This amendment is submitted in response to the office action dated December 12, 2002.

✓  
32 Please amend this application as follows:

**IN THE CLAIMS**

Cancel claims 27-36 and replace them by claims 39-48, which follow. Replace claim 38 by the following, and add claim 49:

✓ Claim 38: A method for determining seroconversion in a human subject infected with hepatitis C virus, comprising: (i) incubating a sample taken from said subject, with a first solid phase bound polypeptide, and a second, labeled polypeptide which is in solution, wherein the amino acid sequence of said first and second polypeptides are found in hepatitis C virus protein NS3 region, said incubation being carried out under reducing conditions, to determine binding of a hepatitis C virus specific antibody to both of said first and second polypeptides, and (ii) comparing results from (i) to results obtained at a previous point in time from said subject which were negative for presence of antibodies to hepatitis C virus protein NS3 region, wherein a difference in (i) as compared to results obtained from said

